BIODIVERSITY AND OCEAN

Overview

Oceans and biodiversity are fundamental to climate stability, human well-being, and resilient economies, yet are among the systems most severely affected by climate change and ecosystem degradation. Ensuring greater coherence among climate and ocean actions is a priority of the COP31 Presidency.

Negotiation Goal

- The EU should demonstrate leadership by accelerating implementation and proper enforcement of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF)
- The EU should ensure that climate action, biodiversity protection and ocean governance are mutually reinforcing and translated into concrete policies, investment and implementation, including through the forthcoming European Ocean Act, which should provide a framework for managing increasing pressures and competing uses of marine space.
- Ensure the European Ocean Act establishes ecosystem-based maritime spatial planning by 2030 that accounts for cumulative pressures, climate impacts and biodiversity objectives, and makes the expansion of offshore energy, shipping and other maritime activities compatible with healthy marine ecosystems.
- The EU and its member states should join the States calling for a moratorium or precautionary pause on deep-sea mining, ratify the High Seas Treaty (BBNJ Agreement), which entered into force in January 2026, and bring forward proposals for marine protected areas on the high seas.
- Accelerate the transition to zero-emission shipping and ports through increased funding to innovative technologies developed in Europe, while tackling air pollution, underwater noise, plastics and marine litter in line with Target 7 of the KM-GBF, ensuring that decarbonisation measures themselves do not create new pressures on biodiversity or marine ecosystems.

GCE Objectives

- Scale up ecosystem protection action and restoration to deliver climate and biodiversity goals
- Put ecological limits at the heart of maritime spatial planning
- Back a moratorium on deep-sea mining and the implementation of the High Seas Treaty
- Make maritime transport climate-neutral and pollution-free

Status Quo

Biodiversity Convention COP17 Armenia is a COP dedicated to Biodiversity

- The Convention on Biological Diversity was signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and is dedicated to conserving biological diversity. It has now been ratified by 195 countries, plus the European Union, but not by the United States or the Vatican.
- This year, countries will assess for the first time their progress towards the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).
- The framework was agreed in 2022 and targets include restoring 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030, as well as conserving 30% of land, waters and sea. It also set a goal of halting human induced extinction of known threatened species. By 2050, it wants to see the abundance of native wild species increased to healthy and resilient levels.

Key Terms & Acronyms

- EU Nature Restoration Regulation
- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF)
- European Ocean Act
- Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement)
- High Seas Treaty

Expected Challenges & Fault Lines

- Acknowledgement of the importance on Oceans for our ecosystems and functions as carbon sinks
- Finance gap
- Handling of international waters in terms of deep sea mining, shipping, pollution, protected areas